**Cross And Crown Christian Outreach**

[www.crossandcrownchristianministry.org](http://www.crossandcrownchristianministry.org)

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**Worship The God Of The Land.**

**Then the king of Assyria gave this order: “Have one of the priests you took captive from Samaria go back to live there and teach the people what the god of the land requires.” -** 2Kgs 17:27 NIV

The Israelites of the Northern kingdom had consistently disobeyed, disrespected and disregarded Jehovah, and after so many occasions of receiving forgiveness and restoration, only for them to go back to sin, He decided that the punishment for them was for them to go into captivity in exile. He had accused them mainly of worshipping other gods, getting secretly involved in evil acts and being wicked towards Him - 2Kgs. 17:7-17. Shalmaneser who was unknowingly implementing the decision of Jehovah on the Israelites decided to lay a siege against Samaria and on defeating them, deported them all to Assyria and replaced them with people from Babylon, Kuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharvaim who took over Samaria and lived in its towns – 2Kgs. 17:1-6; 24.

Having been relocated by the authority of the king, they must have thought that was all they needed to live peacefully and enjoy the goodness of the land, but they soon discovered that they needed more than the authorization of the king to do so. This is because, as soon as they settled in the land, wild lions appeared from no where and started devouring the people, a development that the bible reveals was because they were not worshipping Jehovah – 2Kgs. 17:25. It must have taken divine wisdom on the part of the advisers of the king to have quickly diagnosed and informed him that the none worship of the god of the land by its new occupants was the reason for the invasion by the lions, so the king directed that arrangements be made to bring a Priest from among the Israelites back to Samaria for the purpose of teaching the people how to worship the god of the land, who undoubtedly was Jehovah – 2Kgs. 17:25-28.

Though, the bible did not expressly reveal it, but life must have returned to normal afterwards as the people began to learn to worship Jehovah. What did not change however was the resoluteness of the different nationalities to, along side serving Jehovah, import their own gods and appoint priests to officiate on their behalf in the shrines built for them, and to also serve these gods in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been brought – 2Kgs. 17:32-33.

A similar situation occurs today amongst many converts to Christianity, especially those who got converted as adults. Most of them were active members of a religious group before their conversion and had gotten used to a particular mode of worship and practice. In truth, they decided to accept Christ as Lord and Saviour and worship Jehovah exclusively, but that was not going to be sufficient to erase the memory of what they have always understood worship to be, as they do not have appropriate knowledge of how the Christian God called Jehovah should be worshipped. They may watch others who have been longer in the fold taking some actions in the course of worship and decide to follow suit, but the thinking behind such actions will remain a mystery to them, so they end up performing actions, the basis of which they do not know and may not be fully convinced about. Worse still is the possibility that the individual whose lead they choose to follow may also be a victim of improper or incomplete indoctrination and the consequence of such is an increase in the number of ignorant worshippers in the group and the propagation of wrong doctrines. The lack of proper indoctrination may also encourage the new convert to slip back into the old worship methods whilst remaining in the new Faith, and if not quickly corrected may make the new convert accept the old knowledge as the norm.

Without prejudice to the previous religious groups that such an individual may have been previously associated with, it is simply impossible to have different religious groups operate the same mode of worship so such will end up attempting to proverbially “sing the Lord’s song in a strange Land” (Psa 137:4), except that in this case, the reverse will be the case as it will be an attempt to sing a strange song in Jehovah’s land.

It is good to win new converts into the Christian Faith, but their acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour will not automatically make them know how to worship the Christian God, more specifically in the god that they have found themselves. A deliberate, formal and purpose driven arrangement must be made to teach new converts how the Christian god should be worshipped, especially with respect to the specific denomination. Absence of this remains a major reason for the existence of various modes of worship amongst Christians, individuals or groups of the same denomination today, with people mixing the knowledge of worship methods they acquired from previous worship groups with their worship methods as Christians or members of particular denomination or sect.

Worse is the situation where the new convert knows absolutely nothing about the worship methods recommended by Jehovah for the specific group and so ends up worshipping in a Christian environment but not worshipping Jehovah. Jehovah does have standards as He is not a god that can be worshipped any how. Save new converts from being exposed to the danger of spiritual Lions like the strangers that were brought to live in Samaria by presenting a formal platform where the knowledge of how to properly worship Jehovah will be taught. That way, such a convert will enjoy the full benefit of not just being a Christian but one that worships effectively and so enjoy the full benefit of being in Christ. May God bestow on us the knowledge to worship him appropriately in the land that he has placed us so that we can be appropriately rewarded in Jesus’ name. Amen.

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